

115TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 2068

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide veterans affected by school closures certain relief and restoration of educational benefits, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 6, 2017

Mr. TAKANO (for himself, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. RUSH, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. PETERS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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## A BILL

To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide veterans affected by school closures certain relief and restoration of educational benefits, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-  
2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Department of Veter-  
5 ans Affairs Veterans Education Relief and Restoration  
6 Act of 2017”.

**1 SEC. 2. RESTORATION OF ENTITLEMENT TO EDUCATIONAL  
2 ASSISTANCE AND OTHER RELIEF FOR VET-  
3 ERANS AFFECTED BY SCHOOL CLOSURE.**

**4 (a) EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.—**

8        “(d) DISCONTINUATION OF EDUCATION DUE TO  
9 SCHOOL CLOSURE.—

10               “(1) IN GENERAL.—Any payment of edu-  
11               cational assistance described in paragraph (2) shall  
12               not—

13               “(A) be charged against any entitlement to  
14               educational assistance of the individual con-  
15               cerned under this chapter; or

16               “(B) be counted against the aggregate pe-  
17               riod for which section 3695 of this title limits  
18               the individual’s receipt of educational assistance  
19               under this chapter.

“(2) DESCRIPTION OF PAYMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE.—Subject to paragraph (3), the payment of educational assistance described in this paragraph is the payment of such assistance to an individual for pursuit of a course or courses under this chapter if the Secretary finds that the individual—

1                 “(A) was forced to discontinue such course  
2                 pursuit as a result of a permanent school clo-  
3                 sure; and

4                 “(B) did not receive credit, or lost training  
5                 time, toward completion of the program of edu-  
6                 cation being pursued at the time of such clo-  
7                 sure.

8                 “(3) PERIOD FOR WHICH PAYMENT NOT  
9                 CHARGED.—The period for which, by reason of this  
10                 subsection, educational assistance is not charged  
11                 against entitlement or counted toward the applicable  
12                 aggregate period under section 3695 of this title  
13                 shall not exceed the aggregate of—

14                 “(A) the portion of the period of enroll-  
15                 ment in the course or courses from which the  
16                 individual failed to receive credit or with respect  
17                 to which the individual lost training time, as de-  
18                 termined under paragraph (2)(B); and

19                 “(B) the period by which monthly stipend  
20                 is extended under section 3680(a)(2)(B) of this  
21                 title.”.

22                 (2) APPLICABILITY.—Subsection (d) of such  
23                 section, as added by paragraph (1), shall apply with  
24                 respect to courses and programs of education discon-  
25                 tinued as described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of

1       paragraph (2) of such subsection in fiscal year 2015  
2       or any fiscal year thereafter.

3           (b) MONTHLY HOUSING STIPEND.—

4              (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 3680(a) of such title  
5       is amended—

6                  (A) by striking the matter after paragraph  
7                   (3)(B);

8                  (B) in paragraph (3), by redesignating  
9       subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and  
10      (ii), respectively;

11                (C) by redesignating paragraphs (1)  
12       through (3) as subparagraphs (A) through (C),  
13       respectively;

14                (D) in the matter before subparagraph  
15       (A), as redesignated, in the first sentence, by  
16       striking “Payment of” and inserting “(1) Ex-  
17       cept as provided in paragraph (2), payment of”;  
18       and

19                (E) by adding at the end the following new  
20       paragraph (2):

21                “(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), the Secretary  
22       may, pursuant to such regulations as the Secretary shall  
23       prescribe, continue to pay allowances to eligible veterans  
24       and eligible persons enrolled in courses set forth in para-  
25       graph (1)(A)—

1           “(A) during periods when schools are tempo-  
2 rarily closed under an established policy based on an  
3 Executive order of the President or due to an emer-  
4 gency situation, except that the total number of  
5 weeks for which allowances may continue to be so  
6 payable in any 12-month period may not exceed four  
7 weeks; or

8           “(B) solely for the purpose of awarding a  
9 monthly housing stipend described in section 3313  
10 of this title, during periods following a permanent  
11 school closure, except that payment of such a sti-  
12 pend may only be continued until the earlier of—

13           “(i) the date of the end of the term, quar-  
14 ter, or semester during which the school closure  
15 occurred; and

16           “(ii) the date that is 4 months after the  
17 date of the school closure.”.

18           (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Paragraph  
19 (1)(C)(ii) of such section, as redesignated, is amend-  
20 ed by striking “described in subclause (A) of this  
21 clause” and inserting “described in clause (ii)”.

